remedy this defect. At present, there were great many inconveniences in all the ports in the State for vessels to anchor safely and especially so during the monsoons. This standing drawback could be got over, if better sites for ports be selected at the spots where the sea and the backwater unite. By deepening the bars in such places, the vessels could freely enter the backwaters and lie at anchor safely at all times. That was what is being done in all advanced countries. There were two places in the State where such advantages were available, one being the Kythapuzha or Arukutti backwater near Cochin and the other the Ashtamudi lake near the Nindakara bar at Quilon. Of these two, Arukutti should be preferred for the reason that the cost of the harbour would not have to be wholly borne by the State and that the great volume of trade likely to be attracted to Cochin would be diverted there. Even at present, the greater portion of the export trade at Cochin was from Travancore. It was deplorable that there was not a single good port in Travancore, though it could boast of a sea coast of 180 miles. Inland States like Mysore were incurring heavy expenditure and taking great trouble to secure a site for a port, while the natural facilities in Travancore were not being utilised to its best advantage. The attempt to develop Alleppey which had no natural facilities had only tended to the decline of Quilon which on account of its favourable situation could have been more easily improved. With the development of Cochin, Alleppey must suffer as commercial transactions could not be carried on all the year round. So it was highly imperative that an earnest effort should be made to open a good harbour some where instead of wasting money on petty works and repairs in unimportant ports. And for various reasons, Arukutti was the place best fitted for such a harbour. The distance from the proposed harbour at Cochin to that place was only five miles, and the backwater connecting these places was over 40 feet in depth in most parts. A short distance alone would have to be deepened and even that to not more than 10 feet at the most. Over 5,000 acres of the backwater was in Travancore territory; but the portion to be deepened lay within Cochin and so the permission of that State would be required. But in consideration of the fact that Travancore had in the past given similar concessions to Cochin in the matter of the Cochin Railway line and to the Madras Government in connection with the construction of the Periyar Dam, Travancore could rightly expect that both those Governments would not grudge the permission if asked for in time. If it was found feasible to construct a harbour at Arukutti, the scheme could be worked at a moderate cost. The sites for wharves, warehouses, &c., were cheaply available there, unlike at Cochin. The tonnage of Travancore goods exported at Cochin at present was about $2\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs. The export duty for this quantity at the rate of 8 annas per ton was Rs. $1\frac{1}{4}$ lakhs. This was very much more than the interest for the capital that would have to be invested for the scheme. In order that the authorities of the Cochin harbour scheme might not impose any prohibitory duty on vessels calling at Arukutti, it was desirable that Arukutti port should form part of the Cochin harbour scheme and that Travancore should contribute one-third of the expenditure and thus share one-third of the income of the whole scheme. It was the imperative duty of Travancore at this juncture to take such a part in the harbour scheme at Cochin. But if the Cochin harbour scheme authorities were not amenable to that proposal, no time should be lost to construct a good harbour at Quilon. If Travancore did not succeed in getting a share in the Cochin harbour scheme as above indicated, then the proposed Railway lines in the State would only contribute to enrich the coffers of Cochin. The exension of the Cochin harbour to Arukutti would also materially improve the much neglected con dition of the Shertallay taluk.

Dewan's reply.—The matter is receiving careful consideration.

III. PROTECTION.

Legislation, Criminal and Civil Justice.

28. Reform of the Travancore Legislative Council.

Mr. K. N. Padmanabha Pillai (Member, Municipal Council, Padmanabhapuram) thanked the Dewan for his announcement in the opening Address regarding the proposed expansion of the Legislative Council, and said that, in view of that

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

announcement, he had not much to say. He, however, requested that the number of non-official elected members might be so increased that they might form a majority as compared with the number of the official and nominated members put together, both in the Council and in the Budget Committee.

29. Reform of the Travancore Legislative Council.

Mr. R. Sivaramakrishna Aiyar (Member, Kalkulam Taluk) expressed the thanks of the people of Kalkulam to the Government for the outline of the future policy contained in the Dewan's opening Address and for the promise of the contemplated extension of the people's rights and privileges. Having regard to the announcement in the opening Address about the proposed expansion of the Legislative Council, the Member represented that he had very little to say on the subject, but submitted that the non-official majority in the Council could be a substantial improvement only if all of them were elected by the people. To say that this would make Government powerless was, in the opinion of the Member, a fiction. It would, he said, show that the people were being taken into the confidence of Government, and thereby the administration could not be weakened but only strengthened considerably. The Member also said that there was a further safeguard in the existing Regulation, *viz.*, Section 13, which expressly reserved the independent prerogative of the Sovereign to make laws. This prerogative, the Member added, had not been renounced by the creation of the Legislative Council and Section 13 of the present Regulation was absolutely necessary.

Mr. Kesava Pillai Padmanabha Pillai (Member, Neyyattinkara Taluk) observed that the reforms introduced by the Legislative Council Regulation, I of 1095, were neither substantial nor adequate to the needs of the times and expressed his feelings of gratification and thankfulness to the Government for the announcement that the Legislative Council would be granted the privilege of a non-official majority and the right to put supplementary questions and move resolutions on matters of public interest. He said that the proposed reforms should be substantial and such as to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the people. The Cochin Legislative Council which was recently inaugurated for the first time had a decisive non-official majority and, in the Member's opinion, there could be no valid objection on the part of the Government to raise the Travancore Legislative Council to the level of that in Cochin. The Member pointed out that a non-official majority to be at all effective should be sufficiently large and decisive, and that, if a non-official majority was provided only by continuing the elected and nominated members, the change might not serve any effective purpose. The Cochin Council served as a model. The number of members need not be raised to any unweildy extent because it was not the number but the ratio that was important. The non-official element should not go below two-thirds of the sanctioned number, nor should the nominated members exceed one-sixth of the total non-official element. The Member also suggested that resolutions on matters of public interest when passed in the Council should be binding on the Government unless vetoed by His Highness the Maha Raja. The right to divide the Council on the Budget should also be conferred. The Member further submitted that the existing restriction in regard to the number of interpellations might be removed.

Mr. Vikraman Velayudhan Unnithan (Member, Quilon Taluk) observed that the reponsibility of a responsible Government should be in regard to the laws concerning revenue. The Government should have no power either to increase or otherwise alter the taxes or to expend the same without consulting the Council. The Member thanked the Government and His Highness the Maha Raja, on behalf of the public, for the announcement in the opening Address that the Council Regulation would be amended by making provision for a non-official majority, for the asking of supplementary questions and for moving resolutions. But the Member submitted that the people would not be satisfied with these changes. He suggested that there should be an elected non-official majority, because it was not to be expected that the nominated non-official members would vote against Government. The Member represented that the request of the people was that responsible Government

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly